

Schooling

Overview:

Dependant on the birth rate of a nation approximately 1-in-5 to 1-in-3 of all the population of a country is a person under the age of 18. These people are obliged to participate in the free school system of the country as is enshrined in the constitution. Considering that the nation can hold, at maximum, approximately 40,000 citizens, there must be ample infrastructure for the potential 15000 students present in the country.

As such, sufficient efforts must be made to accommodate these persons to promote personal growth through a varied curriculum. The following considerations must be made and developed for the most beneficial outcomes for the students.

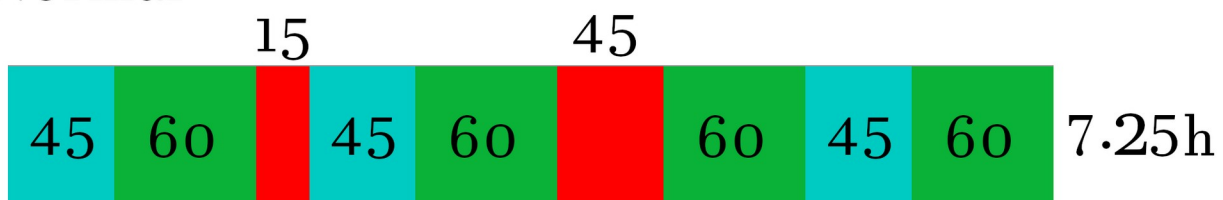
Timetable considerations:

Classes must be long enough to provide adequate content whilst avoiding tiring the students with extended work hours. A conventional school in the western world holds classes from Monday to Friday for six to eight hours, split into forty five (45) minute or hour classes with two breaks consisting of a fifteen (15) and forty five (45) minute sessions.

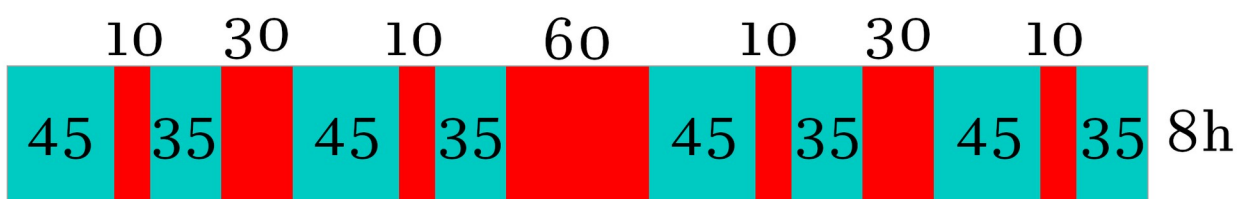
This systems values the time that children are attending classes over other components, be it the actual quality of content or student's fatigue / concentration. These long periods of back-to-back classwork provide no reprieve or retention of knowledge before moving to a different class / topic; Additionally, those seeking assistance from the teachers must do so in their limited break periods, if they can find the relevant staff in that time.

I offer an alternative, if not intuitive, solution for this perceived problem: adding break periods between all classes. Small ten minute periods allow student to receive focused attention from the teacher whilst those ahead may relax and retain the information. Students will also be granted a lunch break lasting one hour and two breaks of thirty minutes. In action the time table would look as below:

Normal



Alternate



Note – This system would be present on most days (MON, TUES, THUR) but an alternate version may be present on other days to accommodate activities or sports which require longer periods (e.g. 1+ hours for a sports game).

Available Courses:

In line with convention, the core of education will revolve around the STEM courses (Science, Technology, English and Mathematics) with the addition of Physical education, History, Geography and Humanities. The latter coursework, I believe, is equally important when considering the overall cultivation of a student.

Humanities are a complex 'taste-test' of ideas that allow student to have access to a varied pool of topics that they may research further in their own time. This includes:

- Philosophy (Rationalism, Morality, Existence)
- Commerce (Economic systems, Trade, Real life applications)
- Beauty (Art forms, Natural, Historical perceptions)
- Anthropology (Culture, Nationhood, Class)
- Law (Government, Law as a benefit, Harmful Laws, Historical Law)
- Design (Refinement, technological process, 'contemporary' thought)

History and geography are also important in understanding the functions of the world and as such should be considered core coursework. An understanding of history allows individuals to consider how the world has come to its current situation. This is usually focused on wars and redrawing borders or a history of their own nation but a holistic understanding would benefit more for understanding societal shifts. Viewing the entire world in a given period helps to show different approaches to advancement and culture.

Optional Courses:

Beyond the courses that students are obliged to attend, they should be granted the right to choose topics of their own interests amongst a list. The purpose of this is to allow a student to pursue a chosen avenue and be allowed to develop unhindered by a strict course outline. Due to this these optional courses, called 'Activities' to disassociate with the obliged coursework, are more flexible, allowing student and teacher to dynamically set goals.

Examples of activities include:

- Additional sports (Football, Baseball, Archery, Running, Swimming, etc.)
- Arts and crafts (Visual arts, Ceramics, Music, Tailoring, Cooking)
- Language studies (Serbo-Croat, German, French, Spanish, Japanese)
- Technical skills (Woodworking, Metalworking, Electrical studies, Computer studies)
- Additional Sciences (Biology, Physics, Humanities+, History+, Mathematics+)

Free meals:

Providing free meals to students (and willing staff) helps to accomplish a number of things: Notably ensuring varied sources of nutrition, alleviating costs for parent and cultivating a friendly, communal dining setting for social interactions.

Taking notes from the Japanese method of feeding their student from onsite kitchens using regional and seasonal ingredients has ingrained its importance in my perspective. Working hand-in-hand with child nutritionists and interacting with neighbouring nations allows those eating the meals to experience a variety of dishes and promotes inter-cultural interactions.

As such, and in consideration to the construction of the school, an onsite kitchen is to be built, allowing for access to a sizeable loading/unloading zone earmarked for ingredients.

No phones:

Neither student, nor staff members are allowed to carry phones on their person. Phones are to be stored in a check-in room should they be taken to school and staff may store theirs within the staff room; With no exceptions. Should a parent need to contact their child they will contact the school and an announcement will be broadcast.

Mobile phones provide no benefit to a child and impede social interaction. Staff likewise are considered role models and should not act hypocritically and indulge in using phones in the presence of students.

Students accessing public spaces for classwork:

Where it is not feasible to conduct a class on school grounds teachers should not be prevented from using public places (whilst notifying the public). Although the obvious example would be using the central park for ball games and associated sporting events, sometimes it may require the use of a public building.

It is planned that the city is to have public workshops which affords the common man to have a place to craft / repair / design objects outside of their residence. These locations contain all the tools required for metalworking and woodworking which the school may sequester at certain times. This also may be the case for swimming in the public pool.

A secondary benefit to this is that the student associate the city as an extension of their school life, thereby normalising their interaction outside of their family and classroom.